

K-621

Circa 1893

Sandfield Public School

Near Millington

Private

Located in the black community of Sandfield just south of the eastern part of Millington, this simple one-room frame school was the third to serve Millington-area black children. The first, assisted by the Baltimore Association for the Moral and Educational Improvement of the Colored People, opened in 1865 in John Wesley Methodist Church a short distance away. Less than one month later the church was burned because of local opposition to the education of blacks. A second school, shown on an 1877 map of Millington, was located adjacent to the church and may have been church-sponsored. The community's last school, built by the county, was one of the simplest and plainest of its type, not even having a vestibule wing, though there was a small vestibule enclosure just inside the single entry. Strongly resembling the school for black children erected at Church Lane near Pomona, also with a tall and steep gable roof, it is likely that they were built from the same plan, perhaps a standard one provided by the state. Greatly inadequate for the number of children it had to accommodate in the early twentieth century, it nonetheless served the community as both school and community center until 1958.

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. K-621

Magi No. 1506215508

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Sandfield Public School (preferred)

and/or common Church Hall of John Wesley Methodist Church, Sandfield Community Hall

## 2. Location

East side West Street, Sandfield (via O.P. 412 and Crane St.)  
street & number south of Millington ☐ not for publicationcity, town Millington ☒ vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland county Kent

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: social

## 4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name John Wesley Methodist Church, Millington

street &amp; number telephone no.:

city, town Millington state and zip code Maryland 21651

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kent County Courthouse liber WHG 56

street &amp; number folio 101

city, town Chestertown state Maryland

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys NONE

title

date ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

Survey No. K-621

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved      date of move _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The circa 1893 Sandfield Public School is located, with its entry gable end facing the street, on the east side of West Street in the black community of Sandfield just south of the eastern part of the town of Millington. Despite its being adjacent to the incorporated town, Sandfield has never been part of it although Sandtown on the Queen Anne's County side of the Chester River is. Sandfield's low-lying, flood-prone, sandy land is surrounded by natural or man-made boundaries that have defined its limits: the Andover Branch of the Chester River to the south; a ditch dug by the local creamery for its runoff and the elevated Kent & Queen Anne's Railroad track to the west; to the north, until recently filled in, the long mill race from the mill pond north of Route 291 to the mill at the foot of Sassafras Street in Millington; and to the east what appears to be the old overflow outlet of the millpond. The one-storey, frame, gable-front-with-entry, one-room building is one of the county's simplest late-nineteenth-century schoolhouses. It strongly resembles (especially its tall, steep gable roof) the school for black children at Church Lane near Pomona (K-457). Both may have been built from the same plan. Three closely-spaced bays wide by three bays deep (with no openings in the rear gable-end), the school measures about 20' x 36'. After the school closed in 1958, the building was bought by John Wesley Methodist Church nearby in Millington and used for a church/community hall. The interior has been renovated and altered for the new uses (kitchen partitioned in the northwest corner, a south-side entry door added, and walls and ceiling resurfaced), but the weatherboarded exterior still appears much as it did almost 100 years ago.

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## 8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
				Black history

**Specific dates** Circa 1893 **Builder/Architect**

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D  
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Sandfield Public School is one of the simple, one-room schools the county began to provide for the segregated education of black children in the late nineteenth century. It succeeded the 1865 school and a later one provided by John Wesley Methodist Church (K-622), the community's church on Route 291. Less than one month after opening in 1865, whites opposed to the education of blacks burned the church; a similar fate befell the black church in Edesville. Greatly inadequate for the number of children it had to accommodate in the early twentieth century, it nonetheless served the community as both school and community center, along with the church, until 1958. Now owned by the church, it is still used for a church hall and as a community center. The schoolhouse is one of the simplest and most basic in the county. Strongly resembling the school for black children erected at Church Lane near Pomona, it is likely that they were built from the same plan, perhaps one of the standard plans provided from the state department of education.

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The exterior walls are covered with lapped, horizontal weatherboard with c. 5" exposure, except for part of the lower rear-gable-end wall, where German shiplap siding was used to replace deteriorated original weatherboard. There are single 4" corner boards.

The building rests on brick piers. The crawl space is generally open except for some areas enclosed with board infill.

From within the east gable-end wall a square brick chimney rises in the center; it has a two-course band. The chimney vented the classroom stove, which was not located close to the end wall but some distance away to allow for a long run of stovepipe that would radiate heat.

The tall, steep gable roof is now covered with roll roofing, applied over the probably original wood shingles. The rafter ends are closed along their undersides; they originally may have been open. The rafter ends are square-cut, and the fascia have a plain 3" crown molding. Roof overhang is about 10" above both side and end walls.

Originally there were three evenly-spaced windows on each long side. The rear-bay window of the south side, however, has been replaced by an entry. There is a single window on each side of the central entry in the west gable-end.

At the main, original entry there is now a single concrete step and a c. 4' x 5' concrete stoop with no rail that dates from the later years of school use of the building. Originally there were wooden steps. There is plain 4" trim with a plain beveled drip cap above the door trim. The door is six-panel and may post-date the school. The short one-light transom is closed with plywood.

All windows are double-hung with 6-over-6 lights. They are unusually wide for their relatively short height. Their trim is 4" wide and plain; there is a bold sill. The paired shutters are gone, but some hinges remain.

The school now is painted grey with bright green trim but white front screen door. The oldest paint on the weatherboard may be Kent County school-issue buff, though it also could be aged, discolored white paint.

The school is said to have had as many as 120 enrolled during the winter term (until March, when boys especially left to work on nearby farms) in the early part of the century, when there was no student age-limit. There then was a teacher and an assistant. The interior of the school was not entirely open; there was said to be a vestibule inside the main entry, but its size and location are not entirely clear; it was said to have been between the front windows. It may have been very small, really just an air lock inside the front door.

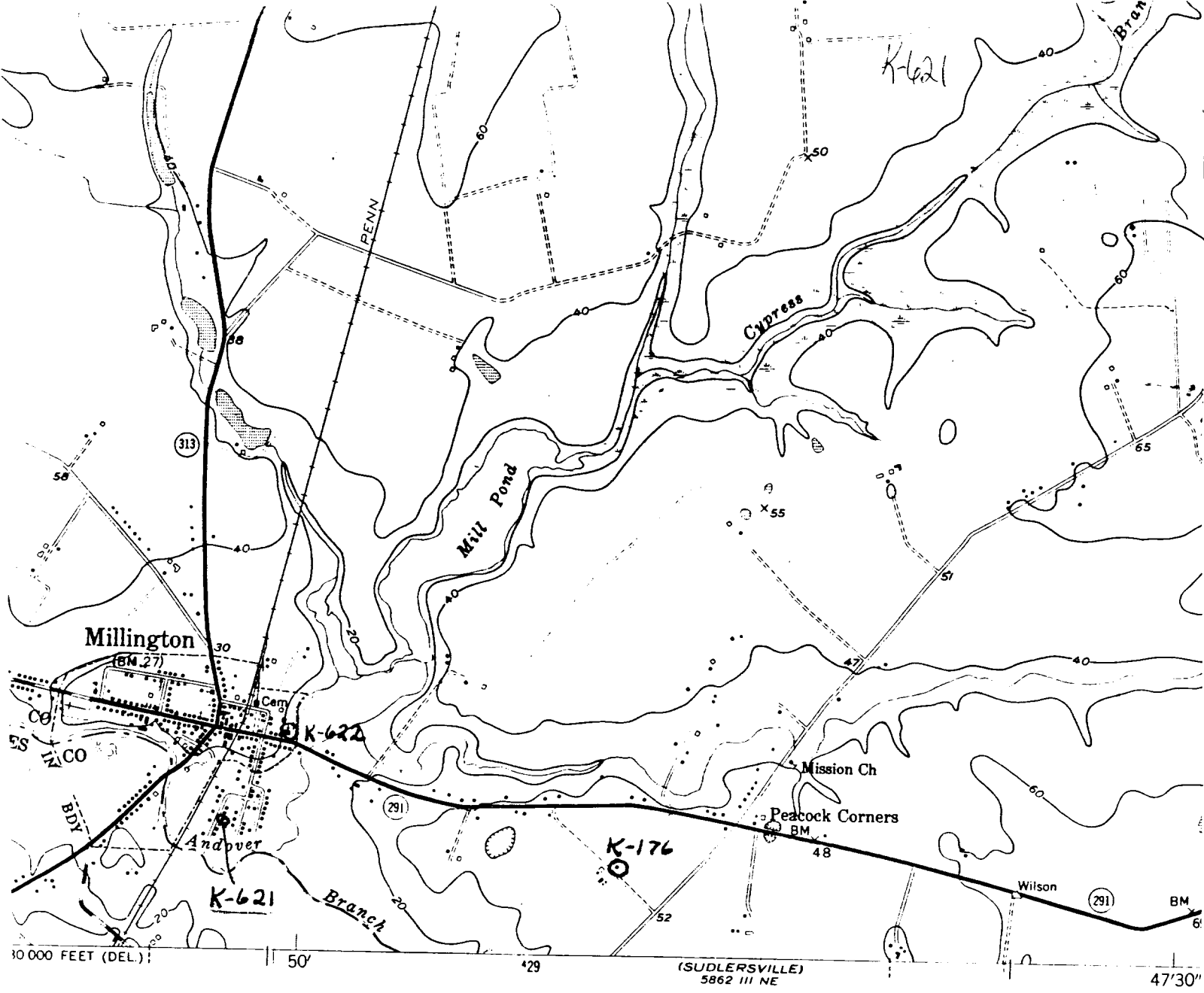
The ceiling has been lowered by installation of a suspended grid system at the level of the wall plates. The original ceiling was higher, following the  
(continued)

undersides of the rafters to the tie beams. The walls were plastered above wainscoting but are now covered by modern 4' x 8' plywood panelling. A stud seen through an exterior wall hole measures 3" wide. There are resilient tiles on the floor. A kitchen was partitioned off in the northwestern corner of the classroom, though there is evidently still no running water in the building. A pump to an artesian well still stands outside off the southwest corner of the building and is still used by neighborhood children.

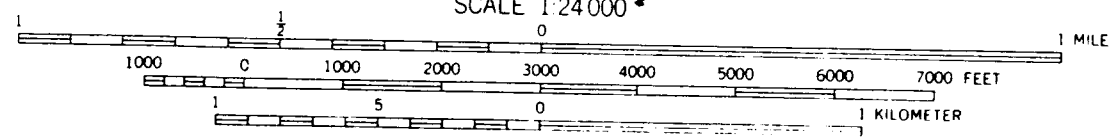
This schoolhouse was probably the third building to serve the black children of Sandfield and the east-Millington area since the Civil War. On September 27, 1865, John Wesley Methodist Church nearby, to which most Sandfield residents belonged, opened a school in the church with the assistance of the Baltimore Association for the Moral and Educational Improvement of the Colored People. Seventy-four pupils were reported to be enrolled at a cost of \$56.15. The October 16 issue of the Kent County News reported that this first school for the blacks of the area burned. Although it was generally thought that it was burned by whites opposed to the education of blacks, the president of the county school board in January stated that he thought the Millington fire was accidental, "due to a faulty flue," but that the similar Edesville fire of November 8 that destroyed the church and its school there was caused by "drunken incendiaries hovering around the election polls." The 1877 atlas of Kent County shows a schoolhouse east of the replacement church. Whether it was erected by the county or by the church is not now known, for by 1870 the state pressed the counties to begin providing schools for black children, and by 1873 there were such schools in every county, though they were still not numerous.

It is not certain whether the Sandfield community pre-dates the Civil War. A former slave, the great-grandfather of Mrs. Ida Duckery Dutton came north from South Carolina after the war and bought, for fifty cents a week, a lot in what may have been the then-new development of Sandfield. It is shown laid out with quite regular streets and lots between the lands of J. H. Thomas, noted on the 1877 atlas map of Millington as a "Collector and Real Estate Agent." The black congregation of John Wesley Church may have lived elsewhere before and during the war, perhaps still on the farms where most of them probably worked, whether free or slave. By 1850 the black population of Kent County was more than half free, and many were small-landholders. However, the property ownership of this community has not yet been researched.



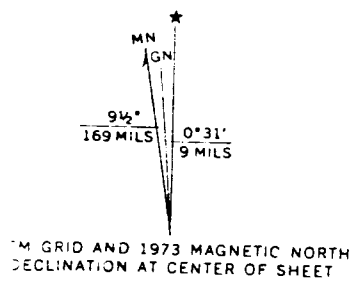


SCALE 1:24 000



CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET  
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



# MILLINGTON QUADRANGLE



K-621

Sandfield School

Sandfield, near Millington

M. Q. Fallaw - 4/27/86

View to northeast

12-12971



K-621

Sandfield School

Sandfield, near Millington

M. Q. Fallaw - 4/27/86

View to southwest

100-12921